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The Handel & Haydn Society
Christopher Hogwood, Artistic Director

Friday, May 13, 1994 at 8:00 p.m.
Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory, Boston

Sunday, May 15, 1994 at 3:00 p.m.
Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

John Finney, Director
Sharon Baker, Soprano
Stephen Hammer, Oboe

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

Concerto in G minor for Oboe and Strings

Grave

Allegro

Largo (Sarabande)

Allegro

Cantata: Salve Regina

Chandos Anthem No.2: In the Lord Put I My Trust

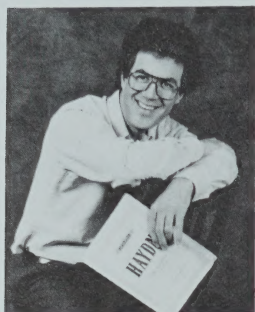
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Cantata: Mi palpita il cor

Chandos Anthem No.4: O Sing Unto the Lord a New Song

These performances are sponsored by WCRB, 102.5 FM

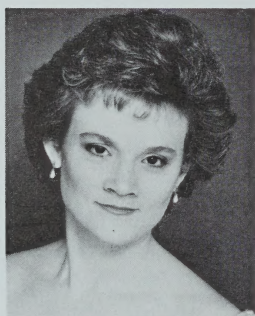
JOHN FINNEY, DIRECTOR



John Finney is widely praised for his organ and harpsichord playing, as well as for his work directing several Boston-area ensembles. He has performed solo keyboard recitals throughout the United States and in Europe,

and has appeared as organist and harpsichordist with H&H, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Bach Ensemble, Ensemble Abendmusik, and the Smithsonian Chamber Players. An active conductor, Mr. Finney is H&H Chorusmaster and Associate Conductor, directing the H&H Chamber Series. He also serves as Director of the University Chorale at Boston College, Director of Music for the Wellesley Hills Congregational Church, and Director of the Heritage Chorale in Framingham. He is on the faculty of The Boston Conservatory, and also teaches at the Academy for Early Music in Bressanone, Italy. Mr. Finney holds degrees in organ performance from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and The Boston Conservatory. He has recorded for Denon, Decca, and Nonesuch.

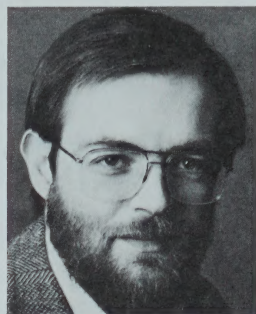
SHARON BAKER, SOPRANO



Sharon Baker is widely acclaimed as a singer of Baroque and contemporary music. She has been guest soloist with H&H in Bach's B Minor Mass at Lincoln Center, and in *Messiah* the past two seasons. Other solo engagements have been with Boston

Baroque, the Dallas Bach Society, and the Boston Philharmonic. Ms. Baker has performed in the premiere of Philip Glass's opera *The Fall of the House of Usher*, and has also worked on the Robert Aldridge opera *Elmer Gantry*. She has appeared at the Tanglewood and Aspen Music Festivals, and has recorded music of Haydn and Handel on the Arabesque label, as well as sacred music of Mozart on the Harmonia Mundi USA label.

STEPHEN HAMMER, OBOE



Stephen Hammer is principal oboe of the Handel & Haydn Society orchestra, as well as of the Boston Early Music Festival orchestra, Concert Royal and a number of other groups. He is a founding member of the Bach Ensemble

and the Amadeus Winds and has been soloist with the Academy of Ancient Music, the Metropolitan Opera, and at the City of London, Bruges, and Mostly Mozart Festivals. He is featured on more than sixty recordings of solo, chamber and orchestral music on the Decca, EMI, Sony, CBS Masterworks, Nonesuch, Smithsonian and Pro Arte labels. Mr. Hammer teaches at Boston University, the Mannes College of Music, the Aston Magna Academies, the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute, and the Brixen (Italy) *Musik und Kirche* institute. He collaborates with Jonathan Bosworth and Philip Levin in building replicas of historical double-reed instruments. Formerly a resident of Boston, Mr. Hammer now resides in Leonia, New Jersey.

THE HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY

The Handel & Haydn Society is a premier chorus and period orchestra under the artistic direction of renowned conductor Christopher Hogwood. H&H is a leader in "Historically Informed Performance," performing on the instruments and with the performing forces and techniques of the time in which the music was composed. Founded in 1815, H&H is the oldest continuously-performing arts organization in the United States. From its beginning, H&H has been at the musical forefront, and performed several American premieres of Baroque and Classical works in the nineteenth century. In recent years, H&H has achieved widespread acclaim through recordings on the London Records/L'Oiseau-Lyre label, national broadcasts, and performances across North America. H&H also offers an innovative educational program that brings the enjoyment and knowledge of classical music to over 5,000 students in 45 schools throughout Massachusetts.

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HANDEL'S ANTHEMS AND CANTATAS

Robert Mealy

Chamber Music of George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

Concerto in G Minor for Oboe and Strings
(Composed in Hamburg, c. 1703)

Cantatas (Composed in Rome, c. 1707-1708)

Salve Regina

Mi palpita il cor

Chandos Anthems (Composed 1717-1719
at Cannons, country estate of the future
Duke of Chandos)

Anthem No. 2

In the Lord put I my trust

Anthem No. 4

O sing unto the Lord a new song

Throughout his life, George Frideric Handel showed a decided preference for the cosmopolitan life. Already in 1703, at the age of seventeen, he had abandoned a lucrative position as cathedral organist in Halle to discover the far more exciting city of Hamburg, and to compose his first opera. We know little of his chamber work from this time; Handel himself was later to reminisce that "I wrote like the very devil in those days, but chiefly for the oboe." Interestingly, three of the works that survive from this period are indeed his only oboe concertos. The third of these first turned up in a mid-nineteenth-century Leipzig publication, which gave it a date of 1703. Stylistically, this is not at all unlikely, given the work's easygoing interpretation of concerto form. After a nobly dotted opening movement, there is a rather sketchy fugue which subsides as soon as possible into a series of exchanges between the orchestra and the soloist. The five-part sarabande invites extravagant ornamentation, while the work closes with the first appearance of a theme Handel was to find very congenial; it appears later in his career in both a trio sonata and an organ concerto. This theme is a mark that here Handel has found his voice, one that would sustain him throughout a long career. It was one which needed a larger stage than Hamburg could provide, however, and soon after his first opera was produced there he took off again, this time to Italy.

Handel's exceptional virtuosity on the keyboard was to be his passport there, and his extraordinary improvisations soon won not only the admiration of Italian society (as we know from several contemporary diaries) but a generous patronage that was to keep him very comfortably for three years. In Rome he also made the acquaintance of someone who was to be one of his keenest musical influences, the revered violinist and composer Arcangelo Corelli. In his few but carefully-worked publications, Corelli transformed the loose harmonic structures of the seventeenth century into a new kind of harmonic architecture, one as lucid and beautifully-proportioned as the villas of Palladio. This finely-developed sense of proportion was exactly what Handel needed as a foil for his instinctual grasp of theatrical gesture, and the works that he composed during his Roman period are almost without exception thrillingly fresh and exciting.

HANDEL'S ITALIAN CANTATAS

When in Rome, Handel did as the (rich) Romans did, participating in the *faux*-pastoral Arcadian Academy formed by artistic cardinals, and performing in their weekly salons. During the summer months, however, he accepted the invitation of the Marchese Ruspoli to summer at his little country place in Vignanello. This moated palace boasted a sizeable retinue, including a miniature orchestra and several choice singers. Handel's job was to produce a weekly cantata, generally to be sung by the house soprano Margherita Durastanti, who was later to join Handel in London and become a mainstay of his opera company there. Inspired by her apparently effortless virtuosity, Handel developed a wonderfully extravagant theatrical language which served equally well for secular heroines as for religious ecstasy.

Thanks to the discovery of the Ruspoli household accounts, we know that the *Salve Regina* was composed by June 13, 1707, probably as part of the festivities inaugurating a new altar cloth at the local cathedral. Ruspoli was so pleased by the contributions of Handel and Durastanti to the proceedings that he gave them each a jeweled ring. Certainly this cantata was the perfect vehicle for both of them: it

requires virtuosity from not only the singer but from the keyboard player, with an elaborate obbligato part for the organ in the third movement. Handel makes the most of his text in the adagio second movement, with its literally breathtaking silences at “suspiramus,” its moans at “gementes,” and its extraordinarily desolate ending “in this valley of tears.” The third movement (its marking “largo” reminds us that this did not always mean “slow”) provides opportunities for everyone, even the continuo cellist, to shine, and the work ends with a final invocation of “merciful, pious, sweet virgin Mary,” to be played “adagissimo.”

Mi palpita il cor turned out to be one of Handel's most popular cantatas. Manuscript copies circulated widely, and the piece exists in several different versions; its most usual incarnations are either for alto and flute obbligato or (as in our performance) for soprano and oboe. Like many of Handel's Italian cantatas, it treats the stylized conventions of pastoral love as serious emotional events, and within its miniature form the work covers a surprising amount of emotional ground. The centerpiece of this *scena* is an aching *siciliano* of great beauty.

CHANDOS ANTHEMS

After leaving Italy, most of Handel's career was occupied with producing his operas and oratorios in London. For two years, however, he seems to have found another Ruspoli in the person of James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon and later Duke of Chandos. This shrewd businessman managed to accumulate enough perks from his state appointments to build the period equivalent of the Trump Tower outside of London, a palatial residence on an 83-acre estate known as “Cannons.” The extravagance of taste he exhibited here provoked much teasing from writers like Swift and Pope, who were nonetheless perfectly happy to enjoy his fabulous hospitality. Alas, the position of Master of Music had already been snagged by Pepusch by the time Handel arrived on the

scene, but Brydges soon found a place for him as a kind of composer-in-residence. The Earl was very pleased with his catch: he wrote to a friend in 1717 that “Mr Hendle has made me two new Anthems very noble ones & Most think they far exceed the two first. He is at work for 2 more & some Overtures to be played before the first lesson. You had as good take Cannons in your way to London.”

These “Anthems” are indeed very noble, and are particularly remarkable given the reduced circumstances Handel had to work with at Cannons. For a composer increasingly

given to very colorful orchestrations, an ensemble of six violins, one cello, one bass, one oboe, and one bassoon must have seemed rather spare. Added to this was the Earl's own distaste for his alto soloist, which meant that most of the anthems were written for soprano, tenor, and bass. But Handel found ingenious ways of creating a much bigger texture than these forces would suggest. The first chorus of “O sing unto the Lord,” for instance, opens with solo oboe and soprano, to be answered by the massed



An early portrait of Handel, dated c. 1710, toward the end of his visit to Italy

ensemble. Handel's careful deployment of these forces is matched by a new expansiveness in his melodic ideas, giving him room to build quite extended movements out of just a few musical gestures. For those who are familiar with other Handelian works, many parts of these anthems may ring a bell: Handel was always happy to accommodate a felicitous idea when other circumstances called for it.

Robert Mealy is a professional violinist as well as program annotator. He is a member of the period-instrument ensemble Benefit Street.

VOCAL TEXTS

Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiæ;
Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve.

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy:
Hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Evæ.
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac
lacrimarum valle.

To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.
To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and
weeping in this vale of tears.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos
misericordes oculos ad nos converte.
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis
post hoc exsilium ostende.

Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of
mercy towards us;
And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed
fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

In the Lord put I my trust (Psalms 9, 11, 12, 13)

Symphony

Chorus

In the Lord put I my trust! How say you then to my soul she shall flee as a bird unto the hill?

Air (*Rockland Osgood, tenor*)

God is a constant sure defence against oppressing rage, as troubles rise, His needful aids in our
behalf engage.

Chorus

Behold! The wicked bend their bow, and ready fix their dart, lurking in ambush to destroy the man
of upright heart.

Air (*Martin Kelly, tenor*)

But God, who hears the suffering poor, and their oppression knows, will soon arise and give them
rest in spite of all their foes.

Chorus

Snares, fire and brimstone on their heads shall in one tempest show'r: this dreadful mixture His
revenge into their cup shall pour.

Air (*Rockland Osgood, tenor*)

The righteous Lord will righteous deeds with signal favor grace, and to the upright man disclose the
brightness of His face.

Chorus

Then shall my song, with praise inspir'd, to thee my God ascend, who to thy servants in distress
such bounty didst extend.

Mi palpita il cor

Recitative

Mi palpita il cor, nè intendo perchè.
Agitata è l'anima mia, nè so cos'è.
Tormento e gelosia, sdegno, affanno e dolore,
da me che pretendete?
Se mi volete amante, amante sono;
ma, oh Dio! non m'uccidete,
ch' il cor fra tante pene più soffrire non può
le sue catene.

Aria

Ho tanti affanni in petto
che qual' sia il più tiranno, io dir no'l so.
So benche dò ricetta a un aspro e crudo
affanno
e che morendo io vo.

Recitative

Clori, di te mi lagno;
e di te, o nume, figlio di Citerea,
ch' il cor feristi, per una
che non sa che cosa è amore,
ma se d'equal' saetta a lei ferisci il core,
più lagnarmi non voglio;
e riverente, innante al simulacro tuo prostrato,
a terra, umil, devoto,
adorerò quel Dio che fè contento
e pago il mio desio.

Aria

S'un dì m'adora la mia crudele,
contento allora il cor sarà.
Che sia dolore che sia tormento,
questo mio seno più non saprà.

My heart is restless, I cannot tell why.
My soul is agitated, I know not for what reason.
Torment and jealousy; scorn, anguish, and grief:
what do you want of me?
If you would have me a lover, this I am;
but, ah Cupid! do not kill me,
My heart cannot endure the chains of such
suffering.

Whether there be a greater torture
than this anguish which fills my heart, I cannot say.
I only know that I embrace a bitter and grievous
suffering,
and that I would welcome death.

You, Clorinda, are the source of my woes,
and you also, oh Cupid, son of Citherea,
have wounded my heart for the sake of a woman
who does not know what love is.
If you wound her heart also with the same arrow,
I shall no more reproach you,
but, prostrate before your statue,
a humble suppliant,
will venerate you as the deity that has rewarded
and satisfied my desires.

If one day my cruel lady should return my love,
then will my heart be content.
Pain and torment will no longer
find a place in my breast.

O sing unto the Lord a new song (Psalms 93, 96)

Symphony

Solo and Chorus (*Jean Danton, soprano*)

O sing unto the Lord a new song! O sing unto the Lord all the whole earth.

Chorus

Declare His honor unto the heathen, and His wonders unto all people. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. He is more to be fear'd than all Gods.

Air (*Martin Kelly, tenor*)

The waves of the sea rage horribly, but yet the Lord who dwells on high is mightier.

Duet (*Anna Soranno, soprano; Rockland Osgood, tenor*)

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Chorus

Let the whole earth stand in awe of Him.

Chorus

Let the heav'ns rejoice, and let the earth be glad, let the sea make a noise and all that therein is.

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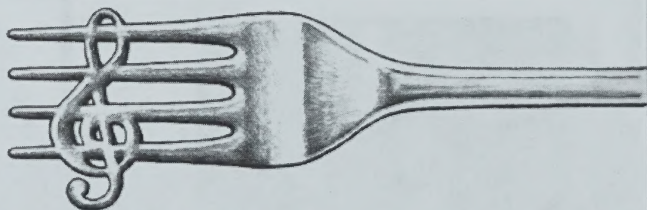
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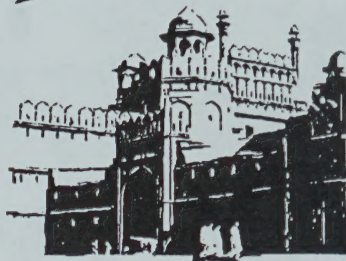
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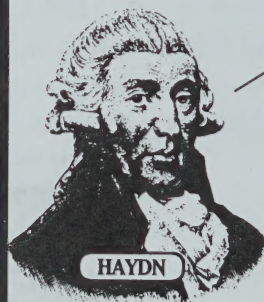
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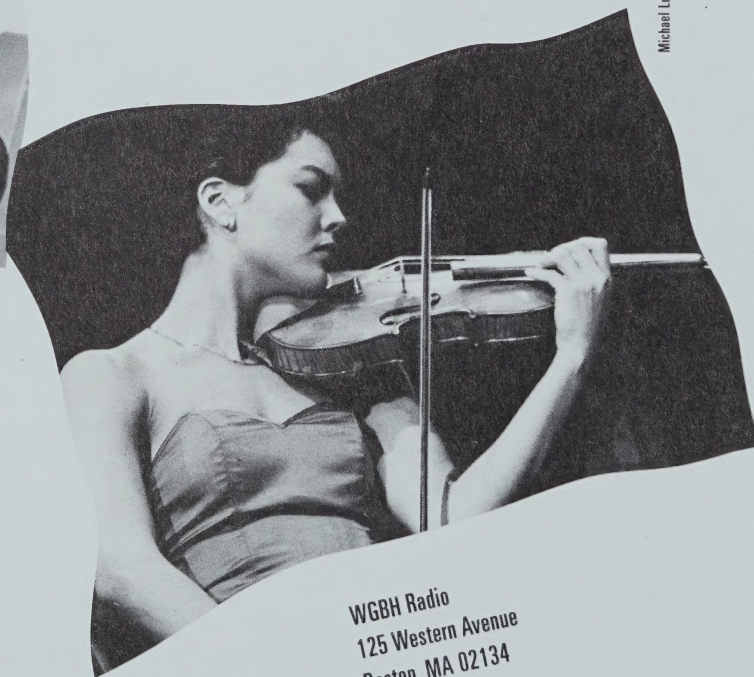
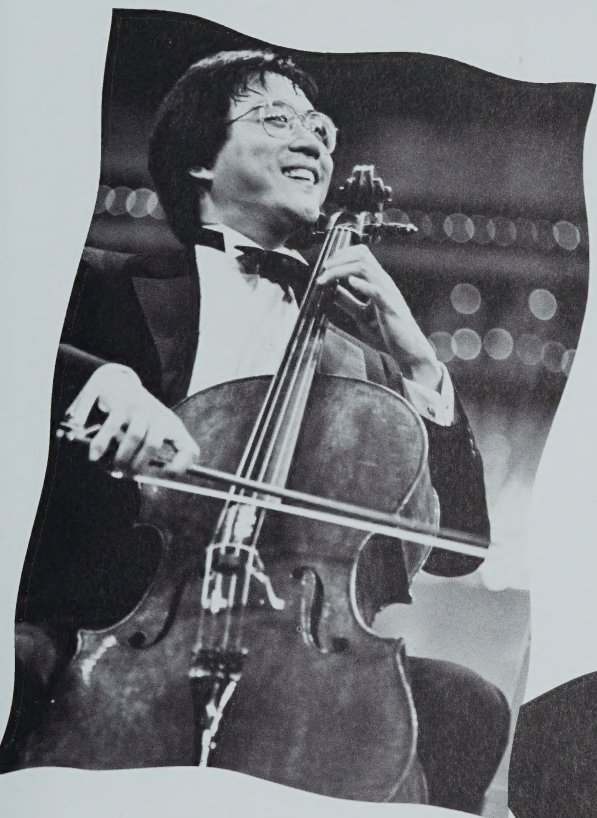
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